common occurrence in the recent past. In order to prevent such calls, an awareness campaign is needed to educate mariners.

(d) Maritime operations in the country get enhanced by way of increase in tonnage and due to expansion of exim trade. Recommendations of National Shipping Board as at (b) and (c) above may also facilitate the growth of maritime operations in the country.

**Conversion of Highways into six lanes**

4616. SHRI S.M.LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have made plans to convert some highway sectors to six lane highways;

(b) if so, whether all such conversion to six lane highways would be clubbed under NHDP-V to cover 5,000 kms;

(c) the States where the NHDP-V would be implemented;

(d) the extent of lengths which would be converted into six lanes; and

(e) whether cost-benefit studies have been done for conversion to six lane highways from four lane highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) and (b) The Committee on Infrastructure, set up by the Government, has considered a presentation made by the Planning Commission involving programmes with a total investment of Rs. 1,72,000 crore for upgradation of National Highways in next seven years (2005-2012). Six laning of around 5000 kms under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase V is one of the seven programmes included in the proposal.

(c) to (e) It is too early to give the details for NHDP Phase V.

**Road Projects under BOT System**

4617. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a facts that Government had decided that all future projects of NHAI under NHDP-III, NHDP-IV and NHDP-V would be taken up totally under BOT system;

(b) if so, the reasons for restricting such highway projects only to one system of Build, Operate and Transfer;

(c) whether other options have also been explored;

(d) whether it is a fact that under the BOT system contractors or project owners are over-charging users indiscriminately; and

(e) the steps proposed to ensure that road users are not exploited under the BOT system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) Government has decided to take up all future works of NHDP, as far as possible, mainly on BOT basis with viability gap funding support as per policy. However in certain exceptional cases, some works may be taken up with fuller funding support by the Government in public interest.

(b) and (c) Government has decided on BOT system after considering other systems adopted in NHDP Phase I & II and also considering the advantages of BOT systems, viz, higher quality of construction and maintenance of roads and completion of projects without cost and time overrun, etc.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

**Vehicles running in the country**

4618. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of vehicles operating in the country as on 31st October, 2004;

(b) whether the road space available to accommodate the vehicles in the country is inadequate and is unlikely to go up in the near future; and

(c) if so, the steps that are being taken by Government to increase the road space during the next five years?